

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ a burner burning a fuel within a furnace in a theoretical air ratio or less;

an air port arranged downstream of the burner and injecting additional combustion air into the furnace; and

an inhibiting gas supply means for supplying a nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas inhibiting a nitrogen oxide from being generated provided in a mixing region formed by both of a combustion gas generated by burning the fuel by means of said burner and a combustion air injected from said air port or near the mixing region,

wherein an inner side of said air port is separated into a flow path injecting said combustion air, and a flow path injecting said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas, and wherein said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is constituted by at least one gas selected from a group comprising a combustion exhaust gas, a mixed gas of the combustion exhaust gas the air, and low temperature air .

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 26, wherein said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is injected into the furnace from an inhibiting gas injection port provided on an outer peripheral portion side of an air injection port of said air port.

5. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 4, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is formed in an annular shape so as to surround the air injection port of said air port.

6. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 4, wherein a plurality of said inhibiting gas injecting ports are arranged in a peripheral direction so as to surround the air injection port of said air port.

7. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 4, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is formed approximately in a circular arc shape so as to surround a part of the air injection port of said air port.

8. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 4, wherein a plurality of said inhibiting gas injection ports are concentrically arranged in a part of an outer peripheral portion of the air injection port of said air port.

9. (Previously Presented) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said inhibiting gas injection port is arranged in the burner side of the air injection port of said air port.

10. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 26, ~~wherein further comprising~~ a system for supplying a part of the exhaust gas recirculation within said furnace as the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas in a branched state.

11. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein a blower exclusive for the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is placed in said ~~inhibiting gas supply system~~ for supplying a part of exhaust gas recirculation.

12. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is constituted by an exhaust gas after a temperature thereof is lowered by a heat exchanger.

13. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4 26, wherein a plurality of air ports are placed along a width direction of said furnace, and each of the air ports is provided with said inhibiting gas supply means and a flow rate regulating means for regulating a flow rate of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas.

14. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim-4

26, wherein a plurality of air ports are placed along a width direction of said furnace, each of the air ports is provided with said inhibiting gas supply means, and a flow rate regulator for providing an increased flow of the nitrogen oxide generator inhibiting gas is ~~supplied more to the~~ an air port close to the furnace center portion than the air port close to the furnace side wall ~~in a~~ of the plurality of air ports.

15. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein a total supply flow rate of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas supplied to said plurality of air ports is variable in correspondence to a load of said combustion apparatus.

16. (Currently Amended) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein a total supply flow rate of the nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas supplied to said plurality of air ports is variable in correspondence to a nitrogen oxide discharging concentration of said combustion apparatus.

17-25. (Canceled).

26. (New) A combustion apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said nitrogen oxide generation inhibiting gas is constituted by at least one gas selected from the group consisting of a combustion exhaust gas, a mixed gas of the combustion exhaust gas and air, and air having a temperature lower than that of the additional combustion air.